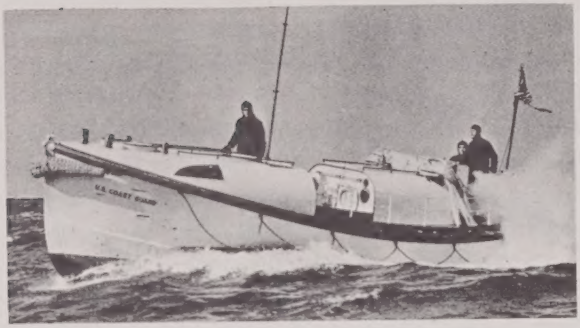
SAFETY SAVES LIVES



BOATING SAFETY HINTS FOR COLUMBIA RIVER ENTRANCE

UNITED STATES COAST GUARD

OFFICE OF

COMMANDER, THIRTEENTH

DISTRICT

SEATTLE, WASH.

SUGGESTIONS FOR SAFE OPERATION

DO NOT

1. Do not overload your boat.
2. Do not leave shore in a leaking or poorly constructed boat.
3. Do not hurry when operating your boat or when securing equipment and supplies for it. Take your time and use caution.
4. Do not operate near swimmers in the water.
5. Do not use kapok filled life preservers to sit on, as such action compresses the filler and reduces its efficiency.
6. Do not fail to provide life preservers for children.
7. Do not be afraid of a boat. Respect it.
8. Do not forget your wake can damage others.
9. Do not fail to reduce speed through anchorage areas.
10. Do not lie at anchor with short cable; allow sufficient scope.

YOU SHOULD

1. Observe the Pilot Rules.
2. Check your battery and its ventilation.
3. Instruct at least one of your passengers or "crew" in the operation and handling of your boat, and see that all hands know location of emergency equipment.
4. Have life preservers readily available and wear them when conditions warrant.
5. Check the weather and tides before going out and have regard for them.
6. Obtain local information and familiarize yourself with the locality in which you are going to operate your boat. Don't venture into dangerous or restricted waters.
7. Make sure that electrical equipment and wiring are in accordance with good marine practices.

REMEMBER

1. LIQUOR AND SAFE BOATING DO NOT MIX.
2. When in doubt see your nearest Coast Guard unit for advice or assistance.

DANGER AREAS AS MARKED ON CHART

A. CHINOOK SPUR, UPPER, MIDDLE AND LOWER SAND ISLAND SPURS.

These spurs are built of two rows of piling staggered. The flood and ebb tide flows thru the piling and when a 4 or 5 knot current is running any disabled or carelessly handled boat that gets against the spur is almost sure to capsize. Even large cruisers and commercial fishing vessels have been capsized in this manner. Give these spurs a wide berth and never get close to them on the up-current side.

B. BUOYS.

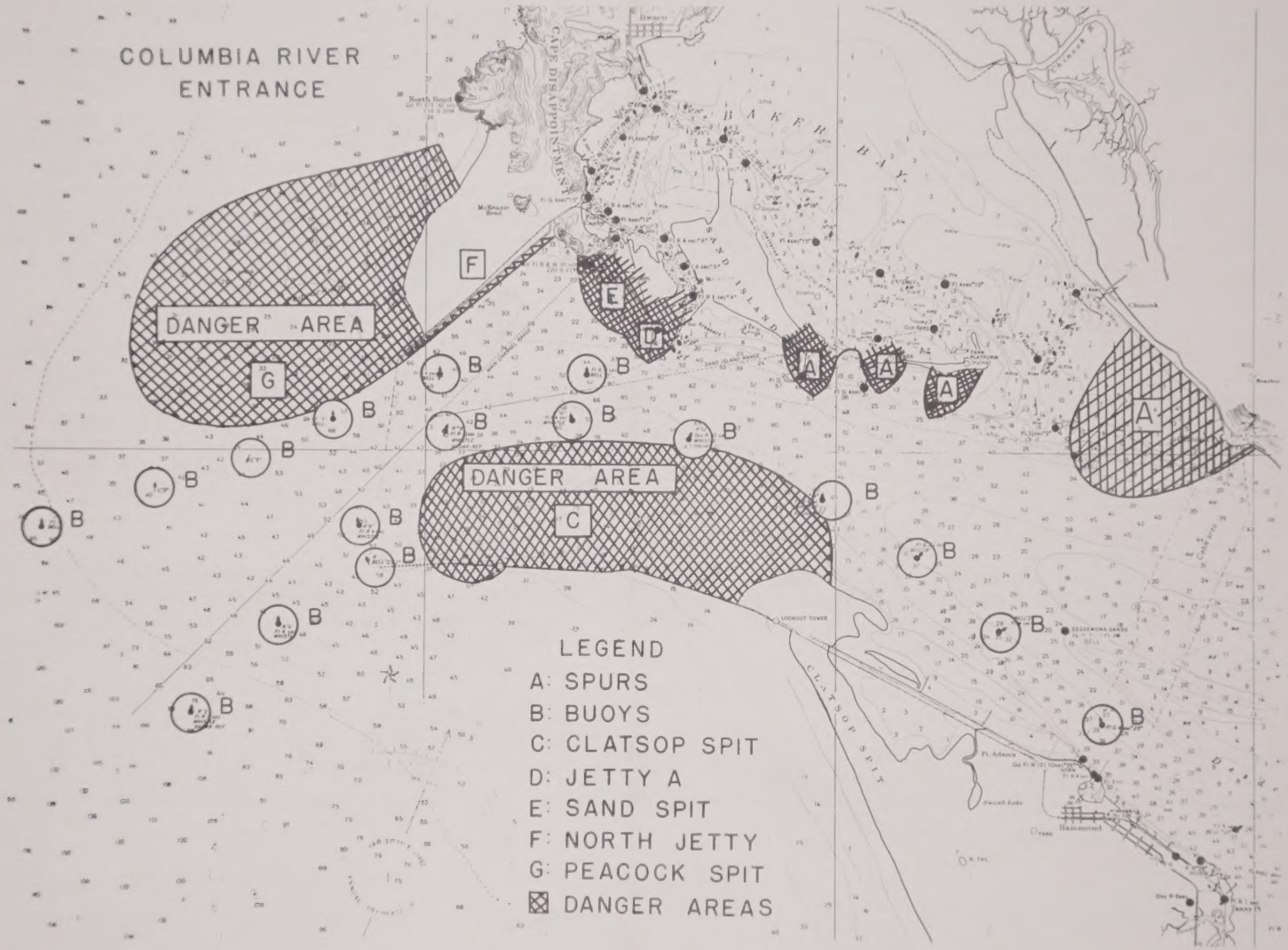
All buoys are anchored by a scope of chain which allows the buoy to move with the current for a considerable distance. Keep well clear when passing them. Never cut across on the up-current side as an engine failure could cause your boat to drift onto the buoy in a few seconds. Numerous craft have been sunk in just that manner. It is against the law to secure a boat to a buoy.

C. CLATSOP SPIT.

Clatsop Spit is the most unpredictable spot in the river estuary. On a flood tide the entire spit may be calm with only a gentle swell breaking far in on the jetty sands. Yet within minutes, 5 or 10 minutes, on the start of the ebb tide it can turn into breakers extending far out toward the channel. The area from the south beach between #14 and #19 buoys out close to #14 and No. 12 and thence around the end of the south jetty should always be regarded with suspicion.

HAVE YOU ?

CHECKED THE WEATHER REPORT AND TIDES.


COLUMBIA RIVER
ENTRANCE
CAPE DISAPPOINTMENT
BAKER BAY
DANGER AREA
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DANGER AREA
C
LOOKOUT TOWER
CLATSOP SPIT
Ft. Adams
Hammond
LEGEND
A: SPURS
B: BUOYS
C: CLATSOP SPIT
D: JETTY A
E: SAND SPIT
F: NORTH JETTY
G: PEACOCK SPIT
DANGER AREAS

D. JETTY A.

Jetty A deflects a great quantity of ebb tide toward the south jetty. Current around the end of Jetty A on an ebb tide sometimes runs as fast as 8 knots. This swift water can cause a vicious ebb tide chop with waves 6 to 8 feet high. Many small boats caught below Jetty A are in great danger when they try to make 10 knots to get around the jetty. It's a small danger area but can become very hazardous to the operation of small craft, especially outboards.

E. SAND SPIT BETWEEN JETTY A AND CLIFFS OF CAPE DISAPPOINTMENT.

Any time a swell is running, this area of sandy beach is covered with breakers and numerous small craft have come to grief on these sands. Generally, the area below Jetty A, near and to the end of the north jetty, is moderately safe on the flood tide. Care must be exercised to stay far enough off this beach.

F. NORTH JETTY

Generally the area from the channel in to and along the north jetty is safe during calm weather provided actual approach to the jetty is not attempted. The main danger is following the jetty down river clear to the end. One should never go closer to the end of the north jetty than a line from No. 7 buoy to the jetty - and then only on a flood tide.

IF YOU CAPSIZE HANG ON TO YOUR BOAT.

THINK ! - - - DON'T PANIC.

G. PEACOCK SPIT

Along with Clatsop Spit, Peacock Spit is the gravest danger faced by the sport fisherman. The gentle swell encountered in the channel is somehow magnified here and the breakers are heavy at any stage of tide. Sports craft leaving the river should NEVER be on the north side of the black buoys. When rounding Peacock Spit, even on a nice summer day, one should give the breakers at least a half-mile clearance. Many times on these same summer days "sneakers" or unusually large swells coming in from the sea suddenly commence breaking 1/4 to 1/2 mile outside the usual break on the end of the north jetty. Clatsop and Peacock Spits are called the graveyard of the Pacific for good reason.

H. EBB TIDE AND NORTHWEST WINDS.

It is amazing, but true, many sport fishermen do not know that there are tides twice each day and the current flows into and out of the Columbia River. Depending on the pull of the moon, these tides may be as much as 9 feet or as little as 3 inches in this area. The average current of the flood tide is somewhat less than the current of the ebb. Where the level of the water must drop 7-8 feet in 6 hours, the ebb tide current may run 6 knots against a 20-25 mph NW wind causing the entire river to get choppy and covered with small white caps - much too rough for the safety of anything less than a cabin cruiser, and they too may have trouble. In such cases the wise thing is stay close to the north shore where the effect is less. If you must cross the river when this condition exists,it is much better to wait a few hours than attempt the crossing. Another aspect of the NW wind is the calm area along and close to the north jetty. The jetty protects the water for some distance - but get beyond that protection and the chop and seas are completely unfit for small craft; - another reason one should not fish the lower river on an ebb tide.

RECOMMENDED SAFETY EQUIPMENT

In addition to the equipment required by the Motorboat Regulations it is recommended that the below listed safety equipment be also carried:

1. Anchor with suitable line or chain for anchoring.
2. Distress Signals.
3. Emergency Rations.
4. Emergency Drinking Water.
5. Flashlight.
6. First-aid kit and manual.
7. Navigation Charts.
8. Compass.
9. Mooring Lines.
10. Spare engine parts and repair tools.
11. Oars for open boats with usable oar locks.

This folder has been made with the express purpose of aiding the boatman, and if these simple rules and suggestions are followed, your days of cruising, sailing and fishing will be ones of continuous pleasure -- not sorrow!

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